



U.S. Department of State

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An Overview  
for Interpreters and International Visitor  
Liaisons (I/Ls) Supporting Educational  
and Cultural Exchanges

Bureau of Administration  
Office of Language Services  
U.S. Department of State

In cooperation with:

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs  
Office of International Visitors  
U.S. Department of State

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## **List of Common Acronyms**

<b>AF</b>	Africa
<b>ASPE</b>	Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges
<b>CE</b>	Office of Citizen Exchanges, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)
<b>CBM</b>	Global Ties U.S. Community-Based Member
<b>CBP</b>	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
<b>CWT</b>	Carlson Wagonlit Travel
<b>DOS</b>	U.S. Department of State
<b>EAP</b>	East Asia and the Pacific
<b>ECA</b>	Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
<b>ECA/PE/V</b>	Office of International Visitors, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
<b>EUR</b>	Europe and Eurasia
<b>I/L</b>	Interpreter/International Visitor Liaison
<b>IND</b>	Individual Project
<b>ITT</b>	Individuals Traveling Together Project
<b>IVLP</b>	International Visitor Leadership Program
<b>IVLP On Demand</b>	IVLP projects On Demand, formerly Voluntary Visitors Programs
<b>LS</b>	Office of Language Services, Bureau of Administration
<b>Liaison</b>	International Visitor Liaison (formerly ELO, or English Language Officer)
<b>MRP</b>	Multi-Regional Project
<b>NEA</b>	Near East and North Africa
<b>NPA</b>	National Program Agency
<b>OIV</b>	Office of International Visitors
<b>PC</b>	Program Coordinator
<b>PE</b>	Professional Exchanges
<b>PO</b>	Program Officer
<b>RP</b>	Regional Project
<b>SCA</b>	South and Central Asia
<b>SCP</b>	Single Country Project
<b>SRP</b>	Sub-Regional Project
<b>TAI</b>	Travelers Aid International
<b>TSA</b>	Transportation Security Administration
<b>VolVis</b>	Voluntary Visitors now IVLP On Demand
<b>WHA</b>	Western Hemisphere



## Introduction

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) funds and administers the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), one of its premier professional exchange programs. The IVLP, a short-term professional exchange program established in 1940, supports key U.S. foreign policy goals by hosting current and emerging foreign leaders working in a variety of fields. U.S. Embassy staff hand-select key contacts who would benefit from experiencing the diversity of the United States and who will cultivate lasting relationships with Americans and their professional counterparts.

The State Department's Office of Language Services (LS) assigns contractors to accompany these visitors throughout their project. For visitors who speak English well, LS assigns international visitor liaisons (Liaisons) to help with administrative and logistical aspects of their travel. For non-English speakers, LS assigns interpreters who facilitate communication between the IVs and their U.S. interlocutors. This Interpreter Guidebook is designed to outline the role and responsibilities of, as well as the expectations placed upon Interpreters/Liaisons (I/Ls) assigned to projects sponsored by the Office of International Visitors.

The Office of International Visitors (OIV) designs and implements IVLP projects in close collaboration with colleagues working at non-profit National Program Agencies (NPAs) in Washington, D.C. as well as community-based member (CBM) organizations across the U.S. who belong to the [Global Ties U.S.](http://www.globaltiesus.org) (<http://www.globaltiesus.org>) network. Members include thousands of Americans who volunteer their time and expertise to strengthen relations between the United States and other countries through international exchanges. NPAs and CBMs arrange professional meetings, site visits, volunteer opportunities, cultural activities, and home hospitality in their communities for International Visitors (IVs).

The guidance in this book may also apply to programs implemented by the Office of Citizen Exchanges (CE), another office in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. CE funds a variety of professional, youth, cultural, and sports exchange programs for foreign participants in support of foreign policy objectives and LS may assign I/Ls to these projects. A variety of non-profit organizations across the United States administer these programs, including universities, sports training institutes, and art centers.

## Program Administration

### **Office of International Visitors (OIV)**

The Office of International Visitors (OIV), Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State, provides program and administrative oversight for the [IVLP](#). Officials at U.S. embassies around the world nominate IVs, and OIV program officers in Washington, D.C. approve them. IVs travel to the United States to participate in one of the following project types which may be conducted in English or other designated languages:

- **Individual Project (IND)** a single participant who travels with either an interpreter or liaison.
- **Individuals Traveling Together (ITT)** a group of 2-3 participants who travel with a consecutive interpreter or a liaison.
- **Single-Country Project (SCP)** a group of four or more participants from the same country who travel with simultaneous interpreters or liaisons.
- **Sub-Regional Project (SRP)** a group of participants from two or more countries within a geographic region who travel with simultaneous interpreters or liaisons.
- **Regional Project (RP)** a group of IVs from multiple countries in the same geographic region who travel with simultaneous interpreters or liaisons.
- **Multi-Regional Project (MRP)** a group of IVs from at multiple regions of the world who travel with liaisons. OIV conducts all MRPs in English.
- **IVLP On Demand Project (formerly Voluntary Visitor Project)** individual or group projects that are 2-10 days in length and often organized with little advance notice. IVs may travel with interpreters or liaisons.

A Director and two Deputy Directors lead the OIV. OIV has three divisions: IVLP Division, IVLP On Demand Division, and Community Resources Division. In most cases, IVs receive international and domestic transportation, per diem, as well as travel and cultural allowances from the U.S. Government. The IVLP On Demand Division does not fund international travel or accompanying expenses, but can fund some or all of the domestic project costs. All participants receive professional programming assistance from the Office of International Visitors as well as I/L services as needed.

### **IVLP Division**

This division oversees approximately 600 projects annually, including multiple special initiatives and projects that address changing regional priorities. Participants examine key bilateral, regional, and/or global issues based on foreign policy goals and objectives. Projects are either two or three weeks in length, typically start in Washington, D.C., and include two to four additional cities. Participants meet with their U.S. professional counterparts, have site visits, participate in volunteer activities, attend cultural events, and enjoy home hospitality with Americans. OIV conducts projects either in English or another designated language and covers myriad topics such as U.S. foreign policy, interfaith dialogue, rule of law, counter-terrorism, civil society, entrepreneurship, NGO management, women and youth empowerment, education, and media. The division includes six regional branches:

- AF Africa
- NEA Near East and North Africa
- SCA South and Central Asia
- EUR Europe
- EAP East Asia and Pacific
- WHA Western Hemisphere

Program officers in these regional branches also coordinate approximately 50 multi-regional projects (MRPs) each year for participants on topics similar to those listed above. MRPs are two to three weeks in length and are conducted only in English.

### **IVLP On Demand Division**

The IVLP On Demand Division of ECA's OIV designs and conducts approximately 200 projects each year on topics similar to those of the IVLP Division, but often projects are more focused on a participant's particular professional interests. Participants may be coming to the U.S. exclusively for the project or may be coming to the U.S. for another reason. Projects can be arranged for two to ten days and are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis throughout the year. Interpreter/Liaison functions are the same for IVLP On Demand participants as they are for participants in the IVLP division. NPAs are assigned to approximately 60 percent of the IVLP On Demand projects and ECA programming staff members are responsible for implementation of the remainder of the projects. The IVLP On Demand Division is divided into two branches:

- Near East & North Africa, South & Central Asia, Western Hemisphere, and East Asia & Pacific  
Africa and Europe

### **Community Resources Division**

The Community Resources Division has oversight of the OIV's budget, grants management, the New York Program Branch (NYPB), and airport arrivals. The IVLP is carried out through cooperative agreements with National Program Agencies and through the support of Global Ties U.S. and its community-based affiliates nationwide. This division also oversees the cooperative agreements and serves as liaison to the NPAs and CBMs. The division includes two branches:

- CR Community Relations Branch
- NYPB New York Program Branch

### **Office of Citizen Exchanges (CE) (ECA/PE/C)**

The Office of Citizen Exchanges (CE) encourages the growth of linkages between institutions in the U.S. and counterparts abroad by funding international exchanges and training programs. They offer programs addressing a variety of themes including youth and women's leadership, NGO management, conflict

resolution, human rights, judicial and legislative systems, transparency, government administration, media, sports, and the environment. This Office encourages grantee institutions to design programs for non-English speakers and to target diverse regions.

### **National Program Agencies (NPAs)**

Because of the number and diversity of international participants and the desire to benefit from private sector expertise and involvement, OIV currently partners with seven non-profit agencies to manage projects. The OIV Program Officer retains overall authority and responsibility throughout the participant's stay in the U.S., and I/Ls should consult them on any significant problems that arise during a project. The NPAs that currently have cooperative agreements with OIV are:

#### [Cultural Vistas](#)

1250 H Street, NW, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20005-2516  
Tel: (202) 905-0889

#### [Meridian International Center \(MIC\)](#)

1624 Crescent Place, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009-4004  
Tel: (202) 667-6670

#### [FHI 360](#)

1825 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 800  
Washington, D.C. 20009-5721  
Tel: (202) 884-8223

#### [Mississippi Consortium for International Development \(MCID\)](#)

1636 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20009-1043  
Tel: (202) 667-6243

#### [Graduate School USA \(GS\)](#)

600 Maryland Avenue, SW, Suite 320  
Washington, DC 20024-2520  
Tel: (202) 314-3500

#### [World Learning \(WL\)](#)

1015 15th Street, N.W., Seventh Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005-2636  
Tel: (202) 408-5420

#### [Institute of International Education \(IIE\)](#)

1400 K Street, N.W., Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20005-2403  
Tel: (202) 326-7695

### **Global Ties U.S. Community-Based Members (CBMs)**

Global Ties US has a network of community affiliates, typically called “local sponsors” or community-based members (CBMs), who provide professional appointments, site visits, cultural activities and home hospitality for IVLP participants. These locally supported Global Ties U.S. member organizations work on IVLP projects and can be independent NGOs, community-based organizations, or programs sponsored by a higher education institution. Most CBMs receive some partial funding in sub-grants through Global Ties from ECA funding. Many CBMs rely heavily on volunteers to carry out their work with the IVLP.

NPA project teams work closely with CBM volunteers and staff to advise them on the content and logistical needs for each IVLP project. When no CBM exists in a given community, the NPA may call on other individuals or institutions in the area for assistance. Please communicate with CBM staff before arriving in each city to discuss any individual participant needs, itinerary updates, and logistics. Please keep local staff informed throughout your stay. Local sponsors are invaluable contacts in emergencies or unusual situations.



#### Tips for working effectively with CBMs

- Communicate with volunteers/staff before you arrive and during the time the project is in their city to keep them informed.
- Alert the entire programming team to any emergencies or unusual situations. Remember, you are not alone out there!
- Show appreciation for their efforts

### **Travelers Aid International (TAI)**

Travelers Aid International is a non-profit partner of ECA currently responsible for administering the International Airport Arrival and Departure Program for approximately 1,100 requests per year for service at a limited number of domestic airports. Services assist participants on the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). TAI staff greet visitors upon the international arrival when the first port of entry is one of the designated domestic airports. They also assist with the Customs and Immigration process (including the re-booking of luggage), and then direct visitors to the gate for the next domestic flight. The designated airports include Atlanta Hartsfield, Miami International, Chicago O'Hare, John F. Kennedy, Newark Liberty, and San Francisco International. TAI operations also occur at Dulles International airport, but due to the volume of visitors arriving directly into Dulles, the Dulles meets are more restricted and not all visitors are met upon arrival.

### **The Office of Language Services (LS)**

The [Office of Language Services](#) is a separate office within the Department of State's Bureau of Administration. Its mission is to facilitate communication with non-English speaking governments and people by providing high-level interpreting (spoken word) and translating (written word) support to the entire State Department, the White House, and other federal agencies. LS maintains a full-time staff of 55 interpreters, translators, and administrators supplemented by approximately 1800 freelance linguists who are on its contract rolls. Support of educational and cultural exchange programs, such as the IVLP, is one of its missions.

LS typically assigns in over 40 languages, which requires a robust recruiting, testing, and training program in both interpreting and translating. LS interviews and tests I/Ls to ensure that they possess the knowledge, skills, and aptitude required to effectively work with participants on ECA-sponsored programs. LS staff conduct in-depth briefings for new I/Ls to acquaint them with the unique requirements of the IVLP. Depending on available funding, LS and ECA also conduct workshops for both new and experienced I/Ls throughout the year.

The Assigning Unit within the Office of Language Services is responsible for overseeing language support to programs such as the IVLP. LS assigning officers select I/Ls for a particular project based on a variety of factors including experience, language ability, interpersonal skills, and knowledge or expertise in the field of study, among other considerations. Assigning is an LS function and I/Ls should not request assignments from ECA POs.

While on assignment, I/Ls should contact their respective LS assigning officer if there are unusual difficulties that require administrative guidance. This includes problems among the interpreting team, which may affect the ability to complete the assignment. The LS assigning officer should be contacted immediately if an emergency arises that necessitates the replacement of an I/L. Your LS assigning officer is also your single point of contact regarding problems with voucher payments.

### *Interpreter Nomenclature*

1. International Visitor Liaison (Liaison) – Formerly called an English Language Officer (ELO),

L/S assigns them to English-speaking projects or to facilitate administrative and logistical details for interpreted projects. She/he communicates regularly with the DOS and NPA project team, facilitates participant travel, bridges cultural gaps, and explains U.S. perspectives on issues or experiences that the participants may find puzzling.

2. Consecutive/Liaison Interpreter (LI) - Interprets into the participant's language from English in short segments throughout the presentation. Speakers do not resume the dialogue until the interpreter conveys previous remarks. Equally important is the reverse process by which the participant's questions and comments are interpreted into English for the interlocutor. Interpreters at this level typically work alone and without interpreting equipment. In addition to interpreting, consecutive interpreters carry out the Liaison responsibilities listed above.
3. Simultaneous/Seminar Interpreter (SI) – Works in a group seminar setting and interprets into the participant's language from English at the same time that the presenter is speaking. Acoustics permitting, the same method works in reverse when the participants' comments and questions are conveyed to the interlocutors. Simultaneous/seminar interpreting requires two interpreters who replace each other at timed intervals. This level of interpreting requires the use of equipment supplied by LS. Simultaneous interpreters are also expected to carry out Liaison responsibilities listed above as needed on the project.
4. Conference Interpreter (CI) – Works at high-level diplomatic meetings in both the consecutive and simultaneous modes. In simultaneous, conference interpreters work in pairs in soundproof booths.

### *Language Interpreting*

The act of interpreting requires tremendous mental concentration. Many individuals have never worked with interpreters and are unaware of what interpreting entails. Therefore, before a meeting or event begins, the interpreter should clearly explain the conditions necessary to do his/her job effectively. This may include asking the presenter for a quick briefing on topics to be discussed, obtaining any handouts or reference materials to be used, or reorganizing the seating arrangements so as to hear and/or see the speaker clearly. In the case of consecutive interpreters, presenters should be aware of how long they should speak before pausing for interpretation. Seminar interpreters may want to give the speaker brief guidance on the mechanics of simultaneous interpreting and how to use the equipment. These decisions are at the discretion of the interpreter, who should use his or her best judgment. The main objective is to facilitate the interpreting process so that the participant fully understands everything that is being communicated.

Interpreters should faithfully interpret all conversations and speeches. Professional interpreters never interject their own thoughts, opinions, or ideas into a conversation. The principals should be allowed to carry on discussions without the interpreter's own ideas being injected, and the substance of the statements should not in any way be colored by the interpreter's own beliefs or opinions. On occasion, discretion may be needed to tone down tactless or offensive questions or statements. There should, however, be no censorship or refusal to interpret a statement in full.

The interpreter should use the "first person" in conveying the words of a speaker, using "I" (rather than "the participant says...") as if the interpreter were the speaker. This should be clearly explained to all parties. Occasionally, before a given interview, the participant may request the interpreter to ask or answer certain questions directly. In such cases, the interpreter should be careful to make it clear to all present that the questions are posed at the participant's request. It is preferable to have the participant at least prompt the question, to avoid giving the impression that the interpreter, rather than the participant, is doing the talking. The interpreter should ensure that full interpretation is always provided, even of casual

greetings, so that everyone understands what is being said.

For larger group projects, a team of seminar interpreters is assigned to provide simultaneous interpreting at all official functions. The demands of simultaneous interpreting are such that a seminar interpreter is expected to alternate with his/her partner, usually in 20 to 30 minute intervals. In no case should this timeframe be extended. A seminar interpreter must remain at official meetings and programmed events until they conclude, and is not permitted to leave his/her colleague interpreting alone for more than half an hour. Any violation of this norm is considered a serious breach of interpreter ethics and a dereliction of duty.

An administrative/consecutive interpreter may also accompany the interpreting team to furnish consecutive interpreting and logistical support when seven or more visitors are participating in a project. All interpreters, however, are expected to fulfill administrative functions during the assignment, such as airport and hotel check-ins, and to provide consecutive interpretation during evening and social/home hospitality events. Interpreters should share responsibilities equitably among themselves. Generally, the OIV expects all interpreters to write post-project individual reports unless otherwise indicated by the assigning officer. Interpreters on group assignments should remember to work as a team, conduct themselves professionally, handle conflicts discreetly, and avoid disagreements in front of visitors.

Any equipment that is required for interpretation must be in working order and it is the responsibility of the interpreter to ensure that it is functioning properly. Consecutive interpretation should not be done when simultaneous interpretation has been assigned.

An interpreter or international liaison's duties are many and varied and cannot be fully covered in this manual. The following basic principles will serve as a guide to the I/L in meeting the responsibilities and challenges of assignments.

## I/L Responsibilities

### **Project-Related Responsibilities**

ECA POs' plan IVLP projects to meet the DOS foreign policy goals and objectives. ECA and the NPA will meet these objectives and specific participant interests by providing community resources that address specific themes. ECA and NPA staff jointly develop itineraries and engage CMBs in each community visited to organize, logistics, meetings and activities.

The I/L's main responsibility is to interpret and facilitate IVLP projects and activities. ECA expects I/Ls to ease participant travel and help manage program logistics. The work requires the I/L to be a cordial, informed, and engaged traveling companion. The I/L should serve as a buffer and mediator if difficulties should arise.

It is important to emphasize to participants that U.S. cultural norms require them to keep scheduled appointments. The I/L may not change appointments without the approval of the NPA or local sponsor and should inform the project team immediately if the participant insists on changing or cancelling any appointments.

I/Ls must adapt quickly to new surroundings and circumstances while expressing interest in and enthusiasm for the IVLP project activities. For example, the I/L should help make a visit to the Grand Canyon, the Chicago stockyards, or other attractions a memorable and rewarding experience, even though the I/L may have visited such sites many times before. The I/L should remember that for the participant, the trip is a one-time experience and that they should diminish the participant's experience by any expression of possible indifference or boredom.

Some participants do not need interpretation but may require an I/L in order to benefit fully from their U.S. visit. LS will assign a liaison to accompany a participant or group for a number of reasons, such as the participant's rank or station, previous travel experience, or because the participant may not want to travel alone. Also, I/Ls guide and assist participants unaccustomed to the U.S. customs, social norms, and culture.

Some participants may not wish or need the liaison to sit in on all meetings, but will rely on them to facilitate contacts and help make necessary adjustments during the trip. Other participants may wish the liaison to be present at every substantive discussion, because of a need to be reassured by the presence of someone known, or because the participant may wish to discuss the meetings afterward for further clarification. The liaison must be sensitive to the participant's wishes in this respect, but must also use sound judgment as to whether his/her presence will enhance or detract from both professional and social meetings.

Even when not helping to bridge any language barriers, the liaison explains and interprets U.S. culture and customs so that the IV's experience is more meaningful. Thus, the function of the liaison is the same in this sense as that of the foreign language interpreter.

The I/L's manner, dress, appearance, and conduct should reflect their important role as a representative of the State Department. This applies to home hospitality and to other informal social occasions, as well as business appointments. Unless invited to come in casual clothes, and then only if the participant is inclined to dress in that manner, the I/L should always appear neatly groomed and in professional business attire.

### **Communication with the Program Team**

A successful IVLP project relies on the voluntary participation and cooperation of many people throughout the U.S. I/Ls should ensure that participants understand the importance of fostering goodwill and positive relations with the NPA, the local sponsors, and local resources. I/Ls should see themselves as members of the "Program Team" and keep in close communication with the State Department, NPA, and local sponsors while providing assistance to participants.

### *Office of International Visitors (OIV)*

I/Ls must confer with the appropriate ECA PO (in person, by email, or by telephone) before the participant arrives to obtain participant background information, international arrival, and the Washington, D.C. hotel. They should discuss the objectives of the visit, any particular foreign policy considerations, and any anticipated concerns. As soon as LS confirms an assignment, I/Ls should call the ECA PO to discuss the participants, learn details about the project, and determine whether the PO wishes to meet with the assigned team before the project opening.

The I/L should communicate with the PO in advance, during, and at the end of the assignment. Maintaining contact with the ECA PO becomes especially important in times of a national or international emergency. ECA POs require I/Ls to immediately inform them if a participant needs to separate from the project or return home before the project's conclusion. Please note that I/Ls may not change a participant's national itinerary without prior approval of the ECA PO. Make sure to exchange accurate contact information with the ECA PO, including cell phone number, emergency numbers, and email addresses. When you cannot reach an ECA PO during an emergency, call the State Department Operations Center and ask for the ECA duty officer who will contact another ECA PO or supervisor.

### *National Program Agency (NPA)*

I/Ls should have ongoing contact with the NPA team responsible for arranging the participant's overall project itinerary. The exception is an IVLP On Demand project programmed "in house" at ECA; in such cases, the ECA PO is the primary contact. Following consultation with the ECA PO, the I/L should contact the NPA PO to discuss the assignment. If requested, the I/L should also meet with the NPA PO. The I/L should agree on the frequency and mode of communication during the assignment with both the ECA and NPA POs. ECA requires a call or email toward the end of all projects. A successful project depends on a high degree of cooperation and communication among I/Ls, the NPAs, and ECA POs.

### *Community-based members (CBMs) and the New York Program Branch (ECA/PE/V/C/N)*

The I/Ls must communicate with local sponsors to facilitate the implementation of the local itinerary and must contact the local sponsor at least three times - several days before arrival, upon arrival, and upon departure. The I/L should thank the local sponsor and provide feedback on the local program activities.

Before arrival, for example, the local sponsor may wish to know if the itinerary has been repetitious, if the

participant is getting tired, or if the participant has new requests or personal concerns that have not been met during previous stops. Home hospitality requirements and concerns may also be shared at this time, especially any dietary issues that were not previously disclosed.

Preferably before or immediately upon arrival in a given locality, the I/L must contact the local sponsor to confirm receipt of the official program, and, if necessary, review any pertinent details, as well as to reconfirm and clarify home hospitality arrangements.

Upon departure, the I/L should communicate with the local sponsor to provide a brief assessment of the project. If not immediately possible, the IL should communicate as soon as possible after arrival in the next city.

While the I/L should pay attention to any potential over-programming by a local sponsor, the I/L should avoid creating the impression of taking the side of the participant and ignoring the efforts of the local sponsor. I/Ls should maintain balance among the interests and perspectives of all cooperating parties and must speak with the NPA PO before suggesting any changes to the local itinerary.

If faced with a difficulty involving a local sponsor, I/Ls should act in a professional and responsible manner. I/Ls should keep in mind that local sponsors have working relationships with hotels and interlocutors that may be damaged by even well intentioned interference. If there is a problem, I/Ls should use their good judgment and, depending on the situation, call the ECA PO, the NPA PO, or the local sponsor to help resolve it. I/Ls may not change hotels without the express approval of the NPA PO and the local sponsor.

The program team may have valid reasons, not apparent to participant and I/L, for not arranging certain appointments or requests. In such instances, the I/L should work with the NPA PO or local sponsor to explain the situation. If a problem arises involving the participant's basic project objectives, the IL should seek guidance from the NPA PO and possibly the ECA PO.

The I/L should advise participants that home hospitality and home stay arrangements are commitments that need to be kept.

Local sponsors in some communities may meet the I/Ls and participants upon arrival at the airport. However, normal procedure is for I/Ls and participants to proceed directly to the hotel upon arrival at any given airport based on transportation information in the project book.

### *Relationship with the Participants*

The job of the I/L is complex and sometimes challenging. Patience, tact, and diplomacy are required to maintain a good working relationship with all participants. Above all, I/Ls must keep in mind at all times that they have been contracted by the United States Government to carry out an officially mandated project. It is all too easy for I/Ls to define their relationship with participants on a personal level and forget that this is a strictly professional relationship that stems from their work under the auspices of the State Department. I/Ls should focus on their principal goal and the professional relationships.

This task is facilitated when the participant receives a copy of the letter from LS that sets forth, in general terms, the functions of the I/L. This letter is available in a number of languages and is typically provided to all participants during the project opening. A copy may be obtained from LS or any of the NPAs. ECA POs should discuss the role of the I/L during the project opening and reference the letter. I/Ls should make sure that this has been done for each project.

The I/L should be aware that impressions are important. During programmed meetings, on social occasions, and at home hospitality, the I/L should be attentive to the participant's needs and interests. The focus of attention should be on the participant, not the I/L, and every effort should be made to make the participant feel engaged with his or her hosts.

Sponsors, volunteers, and professional appointment contacts are sensitive to an I/L's attitude and demeanor. The I/L should avoid over-identification with the participant and excessive reference to the latter's title or rank.

When traveling with a participant, the I/L must stay in the same hotel as the participant in order to be available in emergencies and to facilitate communication with local sponsors.

### **Duty Hours and Time Management**

It is not possible to define or limit with precision the I/L's working day. The participant should be able to reach the I/L at all times, but should not expect the I/L to be on duty 24-hours a day. The amount of work involved in any assignment depends to a great extent on the personality of the participant - whether the participant is a seasoned traveler and likes to venture forth alone or is very dependent on the I/L because he or she has never been away from familiar surroundings and needs guidance.

A moderate degree of social companionship is encouraged. This varies with each assignment and depends on the personalities involved. However, just as the participant should understand that the I/L is not available at all hours, the I/L must realize that the participant may not desire company at all times. The I/L should respect the participant's desire for privacy and not intrude if the participant prefers to be alone.

When not accompanying the participant to official meetings and events, the I/L may have other duties to perform, such as confirming or adjusting scheduled activities with a local sponsor. When these duties are completed, the I/L's time is his or her own. Sightseeing trips and social functions in the evening are frequently an integral part of the project, and the I/L is expected to be on duty at such functions when appropriate. There are occasions when the I/L should offer to refrain from accompanying the participant. For example, the I/L should not go along when the participant is invited to social functions where language is not a problem, unless specifically requested to do so. Even when invited under such circumstances, it is not necessary for the invitation to be accepted if the I/L's presence is not required. However, if the I/L's presence would facilitate communications, then the I/L must attend the meeting. Care should be taken so that declining an invitation will not hurt any feelings.

The I/L may need to explain U.S. standards of promptness for professional and social appointments. In the case of group projects, the I/L should state at the outset of the assignment that the bus will always leave on time. Any participants who miss the bus should be instructed to take a taxi, paid out of the participant's own funds, to the meeting site. I/Ls should use their discretion to determine how much time the bus may reasonably wait for late arrivals. Participants should also be aware that interlocutors may be unavoidably delayed and last-minute cancellations occasionally may occur during a project.

### **Media, and Public Relations**

#### *Media-Related Definitions:*

- **On The Record:** When speaking on the record, everything one says to a reporter may be used and attributed by name.
- **Off The Record:** When speaking off the record, one gives the reporter information that is for his or her knowledge only and cannot be used, printed, or made public in any way. A reporter should

not take the information to another source in the hopes of getting official confirmation.

- On Background: When one tells a journalist s/he is speaking on background, the reporter may publish what that person says but cannot attribute it to him/her by name or title. Rather, the reporter attributes those statements to a previously agreed upon identification, such as a well-informed source, an expert, or a government official.
- On Deep Background: When one establishes before an interview that s/he is speaking only On Deep Background, a reporter may use the information but without any attribution. Anything said in the interview is usable but not in direct quotation and not for attribution.

### *Policy and Procedures for Media Requests*

Current media guidelines are available from the ECA PO. Some relevant passages for the I/L include:

Participants and interlocutors should be aware that all appointments are generally “off the record”. This helps encourage open and frank exchanges. In addition, sessions may not be taped nor interlocutors quoted by participants without their express permission. Professional meetings are designed to give participants background information and allow them to establish contacts and links. They should not be seen as opportunities for exclusive interviews, to negotiate business deals, or to do fundraising.

If representatives from the media are present, the I/L must state at the outset that everything discussed during the meeting is to be “Off the Record” (i.e., in a news report, no part of the conversation can be quoted or used, nor can the names of individuals be mentioned). If a media event was not programmed, but takes place anyway, the I/L should immediately notify the ECA PO, providing day, time, name of the media outlet, what topic(s) were discussed, and when the story might appear in the press. If possible, the I/L should provide the media representative a copy of the IVLP one pager for background information. Should any awkward or untoward circumstance arise during or after the media event, the I/L must call the ECA PO immediately to advise him or her of the situation and to seek guidance. Failure to inform the ECA PO in the event of any of the aforementioned scenarios will be viewed as a dereliction of duty and could lead to removal from the assignment.

At the beginning of each project, participants will be asked by the ECA PO or by mission staff members prior to departure, whether they are interested in speaking with the media - should there be media interest in the participant(s) - and whether they would object to their photo being taken. A media contact is dependent on the consent of the participant and the approval of the Office of International Visitors.

ECA POs should advise participants during the project opening that media representatives may ask them to comment on sensitive issues, or subjects that are not specifically related to the purpose of the project (foreign policy issues, political, domestic issues within their own country or region, etc.). Participants should have the clear understanding that they have the right to speak freely and express their opinions, but that they also have the right not to comment if they so choose.

For the privacy and security of participants, it is ECA’s policy not to distribute detailed information to the media about the specific project including hotel, flight, and itinerary information.

If media representatives appear unannounced at a meeting, it should be made clear to all present that the meeting is off-the-record unless the participants have agreed otherwise prior to the start of the meeting. Local Sponsors and I/Ls should advise the NPA and ECA POs immediately if media representatives attended any IVLP meetings or events.

IVLP participants who are journalists should be aware that the purpose of their project is not to do



reporting, but rather to learn about the project theme and to make contact with U.S. colleagues and experts in their field. These participants should be reminded that all substantive meetings during their project are strictly off-the-record unless otherwise indicated.

### *Contributing Content for Outreach Purposes*

I/Ls can play a unique and critical role in helping ECA communicate the IVLP's impact on foreign participants and their societies. ECA staff, along with the staff of U.S. Embassies in the visitors' home countries, use social media platforms to share information about the program and participants' experiences. In this way, ECA communicates, at home and abroad, the program's role in advancing shared goals of democracy, respect for human rights, economic prosperity, citizen security, and social inclusion, amongst others. In order to craft and share those messages, however, staff need raw content that only I/Ls are able to provide. By doing so, I/Ls can help ensure the continued success of the IVLP. Should I/Ls be interested in broadening the public's knowledge of the program and its impact, all they need is a decent camera or smartphone and an internet connection. If they agree to provide feedback this way, I/Ls may:

- Take unique/dynamic photographs of the visitors in action. While some posed group shots are fine, more candid photos that show visitors doing something, conversing or interacting, practicing a new technique, using a new machine, or involved in a volunteer activity related to their project topic are better. Similarly, a few photos of cultural activities are fine, but photos that in some way help illustrate the substantive nature of the visit are better.
- Be sure that those participants whose photos you take have signed media consent forms. While forms are not needed for the visitors' American interlocutors, it is good form to ensure their verbal consent for their photo being used in USG social media and other public communication.
- Ask resources and interlocutors with whom the group meets what their Twitter "handle" (user name) is.
- When emailing photos to ECA ([IVLPEOE@state.gov](mailto:IVLPEOE@state.gov), with a copy to the relevant State program officer), provide in just a few lines some basic contextual information about the meeting, the topic, the interlocutors, the location, and anything particularly interesting that happened during the meeting, if it can be made public. In the same email, share the relevant Twitter handle, if you have it. Finally, a quote is the gold-standard for captioning information, if you are able to provide one from a participant or interlocutor (with their consent).

### *Public Relations*

I/L's are responsible for knowing the names of any the U.S. interlocutors attending the professional meetings. While it is impossible for anyone always to know in advance who every person present will be, it is essential for the I/L to make sure that he or she knows who each person in the room is by the time any meeting begins. If the local sponsor or main presenter at a meeting does not introduce all of the individuals in attendance, it is incumbent on the I/L to clarify to the group who any unidentified person might be, as well as their affiliation. As a best practice, I/Ls should make a blanket group introduction and then ask those whose names or positions have not been determined to introduce themselves to the group. Having accomplished this, the I/L should then recede into the background, and resume his or her normal duties. The I/L is not expected to limit, constrict, or influence the group's activities or interaction with their U.S. interlocutors unless the activity in question is dangerous or illegal.

### *Attending High-Level Meetings, Court, or Conference Court Proceedings*

The rules outlined below generally apply when attending high-level meetings, such as congressional hearings, court proceedings, city council meetings, large conferences, and official press briefings. I/L's should find out beforehand what the correct protocol is in order to explain this clearly to participants.

- Participants are requested to arrive with sufficient time to clear security and be seated before the conference starts.
- Participants may not bring cameras or recording equipment into the conference room.
- Participants may not ask questions.
- The speaker should not be quoted without his or her express permission.
- Participants are not to depart until the conference has been officially terminated.
- As a rule, there is to be no interpreting during the meeting. The I/L may take notes and give the participant a summary after the conference is over.

### *Personal Services*

The I/Ls' duties do not include written translation of materials for the participant, although the I/L may help with thank-you letters and similar matters. The I/L is not required to assist the participant in purely personal matters, such as sending out laundry or buying personal items. Nonetheless, during the initial stages of the visit, some guidance in this respect may be required. After being in the United States for some time, the participant can be expected to handle these matters with little or no assistance.

## **Emergency Situations**

Developing a strategy for the unexpected emergency is essential and can help turn a potential crisis or disaster into a manageable situation. These guidelines address the roles and responsibilities of the ECA and NPA POs as well as the I/L for certain emergency situations, such as illness/health care, car accidents, death, legal problems, weather, and local/national emergencies. Recognize the emotional stress of an emergency situation and the imperative of clear communication. Please keep in mind the four C's: remain **C**alm, **C**ommunicate, provide **C**omfort, and maintain **C**onfidentiality.

In case of an emergency, such as illness, accident, or serious travel difficulties, the I/L should immediately notify the ECA PO, the NPA PO, and appropriate local sponsors. Additionally, make sure to share information with LS when appropriate.

I/Ls must have the office and emergency telephone numbers of the appropriate project team members and carry the State Department's Operations Center number with them at all times. It is also important to ensure that all project team members have updated I/L contact information.

These instructions cannot cover all emergency situations, and the I/L should feel free to communicate with LS and with ECA directly when difficulties arise or when it is not possible to communicate with the local sponsor or the NPA.

### **Actions Taken in Advance of an Emergency or Crisis**

ECA and NPA POs should remind participants to carry their emergency contact information card at all times and advise them that the card includes the State Department Operations Center emergency number, ECA and NPA POs' emergency telephone numbers, and the I/L's cell phone number.

### ***General Communications in the Event of an Emergency***

Most emergencies involving participants or I/Ls will occur while they are on the road and notification of these situations will come from a local sponsor, the I/L, or a participant. It is important to ensure that the proper people are contacted immediately. The lines of communication are as follows:

1. As soon as possible, contact the ECA PO to describe the nature of the emergency and seek guidance as appropriate.
2. If the ECA PO is unavailable, or if it is outside of normal office hours, the I/L should contact the DOS Operations Center at 202-647-1512 and ask for the ECA Duty Officer. The I/L should specify that he/she is calling about a participant. The ECA Duty Officer can assist in contacting the appropriate official.
3. The I/L should then contact the NPA PO and the local sponsor as appropriate.

## *Procedures to Follow in Specific Emergencies/Crises*

### **I. Medical Emergencies**

- a. **Preferred Providers to Contact in the Event of Illness** - If a participant becomes ill, the I/L should contact a physician from the list of preferred providers that is typically found in the welcome packet in each city. If unavailable, this information can be obtained from the website or toll-free number listed on the back of the participant's medical card. If there is no ASPE provider within 35 miles, the participant may use any medical provider. The I/L should always consult with the local sponsor for medical resources and providers.
- b. **Emergency Room Visits** - In an emergency, the participant should be taken directly to the nearest hospital emergency room. Emergency care may be extremely expensive and should only be used or recommended in the most urgent circumstances (life threatening situations, broken bones, uncontrollable bleeding, etc.) or when preferred providers are not available.
- c. **I/L's Function During Medically Delayed Departures** - If the medical situation interferes with a participant's travel schedule, then one member of the I/L team must remain with the participant. If the I/L is working alone, then the entire group must remain in the current city until the situation is resolved or another I/L can be assigned to assist the other members of the group. The ECA PO must be consulted to authorize the appropriate action.
- d. **Hospitalization** - If a participant is hospitalized, the I/L must obtain and document the following information from the hospital and provide the documentation to the ECA PO.
  1. Hospital name, address, and telephone number;
  2. Date/time that the participant was admitted, and
  3. Name and office telephone number of the attending physician;

### **II. Participant or I/L Has a Legal Problem**

If a participant is arrested or taken into custody, or is the victim of a crime, the ECA PO should make sure that the participant knows that s/he has the right to legal counsel and the right to contact his/her Embassy.

### *Avoiding Potential Problems*

I/Ls should not hesitate to discuss with the NPA PO, the ECA PO, and/or the LS assigning officer any difficulties or potential troubles the I/L foresees during the assignment, or as the assignment progresses. It is best for these officers to be aware of problems before they reach a crisis point. If the participant's attitude or behavior is unacceptable to other participants or jeopardizes good relations with the U.S. Government, the NPA, or the local sponsor, the I/L should immediately inform the ECA PO and NPA and ask for instructions. The same procedure should be followed if the participant displays extreme dissatisfaction or loss of interest in the project.

## **Administrative and Financial Arrangements**

As an independent contractor, the interpreter/international liaison is responsible for administering and reporting on the complex logistical and financial arrangements of a participant's project. Most of these details are coordinated with the NPA team, but it is also important to clarify some of the I/L's fiscal responsibilities vis-a-vis LS and ECA. I/Ls are responsible for accounting for per diem and travel advances that they receive from the NPAs. All accounts must be reconciled with the NPA within 30 days of the conclusion of an assignment.

### **Travel**

One of the primary responsibilities of the I/L is to ensure the safety and well-being of the participants throughout their visit to the United States. With increased security measures, it is important for the I/L to understand his/her role in facilitating airport and other security procedures and in putting the participant at ease about often time-consuming and stressful travel situations.

#### *I/L Travel to and from Assignments*

The I/L is entitled to transportation from his or her official home station or other location as approved by ECA to the place designated to begin the assignment, and return travel to his or her official home station or other location as approved by ECA upon completion of the assignment. After the I/L is assigned to a project, he/she may be asked to travel for consultation regarding the participants' project prior to the participant or group arrival. Note that individual pre-and post -project travel preferences beyond those outlined above often are not feasible under NPA contractual constraints.

#### **Travel checklist**

- Ensure you have all necessary tickets from the NPA and verify that the names are correct.
- Check Flight/Train/Bus status.
- Call ahead to the ground transportation company and hotels in your destination city to verify reservations.
- Give travel briefings to your group.
- Remind participants to check for their passports and all other belongings before departing from each hotel.

#### *Participants' International Travel*

##### ***International Arrivals***

The ECA or NPA PO will inform the I/L of participant scheduled arrivals and departures. The I/L must consult with the ECA and NPA POs to determine whether they should meet incoming participants at the airport or greet them upon arrival at their hotel.

### ***International Departures***

In most cases, the I/L is required by ECA to accompany all participants to the airport to facilitate departure procedures and remain with them until they clear airport security.

The I/L should help determine the participants' travel plans at the end of the project and must inform the ECA PO at once if there is any indication that the participant wants to change his/her departure plans. Any changes to tickets purchased by a U.S. mission require authorization from the ECA PO in consultation with the mission. If a participant wishes to add a stopover to his/her international itinerary, he/she will be required to pay for any additional costs, including change fees.

### ***Visa Status***

If the participant is extending his or her stay in the U.S., it is essential to consult with the ECA PO regarding the visa status. In some cases, the I/L will have to ensure that the participant is in touch with friends or family here and that he or she understands arrangements for further travel in the United States. I/Ls should obtain a local address and/or telephone numbers for any participants staying on in the U.S. and forward this information to the ECA PO. I/Ls should remind participants that new transit visas might be difficult or impossible to obtain if departure plans are changed.

NPAs or local sponsors should never be called upon to facilitate any post-project arrangements or changes in international travel, unless specifically requested to do so by the ECA PO.

### ***Domestic Travel with the Participants***

NPAs will issue all domestic tickets for participants and I/Ls and may issue the I/L a travel advance to cover miscellaneous expenses incurred during the assignment. The I/L should consult with the NPA for specific accounting procedures to be followed at the conclusion of the assignment because internal requirements are different for each national program agency.

The I/L should never travel in an upgraded class unless the participants are also traveling in an upgraded class. It is advisable to arrive at least two hours before any scheduled departure so as to have ample time to complete baggage check-in and security screenings.

### ***Visitors with Disabilities or Medical Conditions***

If traveling with a visitor who has a disability, the I/L should contact the TSA Cares Help Line at least 72 hours prior to their scheduled domestic flight. TSA Cares can be reached toll free at 855-787-2227.

### ***Luggage Check-In***

IVLP policy is to cover the airline's fees for up to two pieces of luggage (not to exceed 50 lbs. or 22 kg) for all participants and I/Ls. Any additional baggage is at the traveler's own expense. NPAs will advance the funds to I/Ls to cover baggage fees for both the participants and the I/Ls (see also reimbursable expenses). The I/L will assist participants at airport check-in and pay these costs from his/her advance funds. I/Ls will collect official airline receipts noting date and flight number and submit them to the NPA, reimbursing the NPAs for any unused funds. All international baggage expenses should be paid by the embassy in advance of travel. However, if any international baggage fees are paid by the I/L, he/she should submit those receipts to the NPA (with the exception of IVLP On Demand which does not cover international flight costs). If the I/L is unable to obtain a receipt, he/she should ask the participant for signed verification of the amount provided to the participant to pay the international baggage fee.

## *Airport Security*

In an effort to smooth the airport check-in process for participants, ECA POs provide I/Ls with an official letter explaining the nature of the participant's trip that may be presented to security personnel upon check-in if necessary. I/Ls should explain to participants that they must clear airport security and abide by all airport security personnel random requests even though they are guests of the U.S. Government. DOS has no authority to require any airline or airport to waive or alter security procedures.

When participants are subject to security screenings, security personnel may ask I/Ls to provide interpretation for security personnel's questions and answers. I/Ls should never try to influence security personnel and must remain neutral in the process. I/Ls should inform participants that security might dictate additional secondary screenings or in-flight procedures. When traveling with a group, I/Ls should never leave anyone behind unaccompanied for any reason. If someone experiences a security or other delay, an I/L must remain with that participant to help facilitate rebooking or other travel arrangements. In this case, the I/L should also inform the NPA PO.

## **Ground Transportation**

I/Ls should confirm arrangements for all ground transportation arrangements for participants during their project-related activities. Groups may only use buses and pre-arranged ground transportation for official IVLP-related activities. If the participants or I/Ls wish to have additional chartered ground transportation (for example, shopping excursions or unscheduled sightseeing) the I/L must immediately notify the NPA PO, who will seek approval from the ECA PO.

## *Driving an Automobile*

ECA and LS recognize that driving puts an additional burden on I/Ls. In addition to a number of other considerations, fatigue resulting from the strain of driving may detract from an I/L's effectiveness in performing primary tasks. Moreover, both LS and ECA recognize that attempting to interpret or interact with participants while driving creates a distraction. Driving should be the exception rather than the rule, and should not normally be used as a substitute for reasonably convenient public transportation, especially over long distances. If, however, the I/L is willing to drive a car during a project, the NPA PO will provide guidance regarding rental companies, method of payment, Global Positioning System (GPS) device rental and their specific rental policies, including additional insurance coverage that should be purchased. If the NPA PO has not provided such guidance, I/Ls should play a proactive role in asking for the guidance each time they are asked to drive on assignment. The I/L should be aware of the following policies:

- The I/L cannot be compelled to drive on a project; it is strictly voluntary. The ability or willingness to drive is not a criterion for selection for an assignment.
- If an I/L cannot drive, or prefers not to drive on an assignment, LS should be so informed, particularly if the I/L has been asked to drive by the NPA and ECA POs.
- A participant may not drive a car rented by an I/L on assignment.
- If an I/L believes that any driver (a hired professional, a volunteer, or another colleague) drives in a way which might put the I/L in danger or which makes him/her uncomfortable, he/she should bring it to the attention of the NPA and the ECA PO.
- I/Ls are prohibited from using a hand-held device while driving.

## *Insurance*

LS and ECA cannot assume responsibility for claims, charges, or litigation, which might arise from automobile accidents or traffic violations involving I/Ls or participants.

An I/L who drives during an assignment must have liability and collision/loss/damage insurance against accidents. When asked to drive a rental car, the I/L should make sure that the rental agreement or supplementary agreement explicitly extends insurance benefits to the I/L. As a rule, the I/L should accept the collision and liability coverage offered by rental car companies, except in cases where the NPA negotiated car rental contract includes this coverage.

Personal injury and personal effects insurance will not be covered by ECA. The I/L may opt to purchase personal injury and personal effects insurance coverage at his/her own expense. The I/L may want to consult his/her own insurance company to determine if his/her coverage (e.g., for medical expenses) extends to rental cars. Several insurance companies extend such coverage to rental cars and taxis. This coverage would be in addition to the coverage provided by the rental car companies.

Personal injury coverage for participants is provided through the State Department's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE).

## *Use of Personal Car*

In cases where an I/L is authorized to use his/her personal vehicle for project related travel, the I/L will be reimbursed for mileage based on prevailing U.S. Government rates for Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage Reimbursement Rates found at <http://www.gsa.gov/>.

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## *Per Diem and Reimbursable Expenses*

In addition to compensation for services rendered, administered under the I/L's LS contract, the I/L is entitled to per diem and transportation expenses when working on an ECA assignment. NPAs have their own accounting procedures and regulations for reimbursing expenses and the I/L should consult with the NPA program officer on procedures to be followed, records to be kept, and how final reimbursements are to be made.

I/Ls and participants receive per diem to cover lodging, meals, and incidental expenses (M&IE). The I/L may be pre-approved to pay for other participant expenses, such as taxis to/from airports, baggage fees, etc. This arrangement should be made clear to the participant as early as possible, preferably at the project opening. The arrangement is also set forth in LS's letter to the participant. If the participant encounters serious monetary difficulties, the NPA and ECA POs should be informed at once. I/Ls should not lend money to participants.

The U.S. government authorized per diem rates are the approved daily allowance intended to cover daily expenses in each city, and are determined by location and updated each fiscal year at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). The one exception is for inter-city transportation and other specified project expenses. I/Ls and participants are expected to use per diem to pay for meals and lodging, fees, tips, taxicabs, and other incidentals. The I/L's per diem will be paid by the NPA administering the project to which the I/L has been assigned. Per diem is issued to the I/L during a scheduled interpreter meeting or at the project opening. I/Ls receive per diem based on federal travel regulations, which includes 75% for the day of departure from home station (to begin hotel stay or travel) and for the final day of the project. These rates are based on the GSA approved rates for the first and last city.



### *Lodging Considerations*

ECA normally requires I/Ls on assignments to stay at the hotel with the participants. Occasionally, an ECA PO may authorize an I/L to stay at home, and the I/L will then only receive the GSA approved rate for meals and incidental expenses.

I/Ls should discuss incidental costs at hotels with participants, preferably upon arrival at the hotel. For example, participants may be unaware that pay-per-view videos, expensive in-room bar service, bottled water, and telephone calls made from their hotel rooms will quickly deplete their per diem funds.

In most cases, the NPA program team will direct bill all hotel rooms during the project and participants are only responsible for incidental expenses at the hotel. IVLP participants currently travel as invitational travelers as a direct benefit to the U.S. government and are entitled to GSA approved hotel rates when available at all hotels.

I/Ls may not share rooms with participants. If the NPA does not direct bill the hotel rooms, then the participant will receive per diem based on single room accommodations. The participant must return all lodging funds not used for the purpose intended to the NPA for proper reallocation by ECA.

### **Pre-Paid Expenses from Program Participants' Per Diem**

#### *Pre-Paid Meals*

During a project the, the ECA PO may authorize the NPA to prepay some meals on behalf of the participants and I/Ls. The NPA will then deduct that amount from the total approved per diem for the specific project. The program team will document and discuss any deductions at the project opening.

Professional appointments may take the form of working lunches, for which the interlocutors and participants meet at a restaurant or café. It is customary for each person to pay for his or her own meal in these cases, and participants should be aware of this in order to avoid misunderstandings.

#### *Porterage*

For participants on a group project, the NPA may deduct fees from the participants' and I/Ls' M&IE to be allocated for luggage transportation. The NPA PO will give this sum, usually \$10 per city per participant, to an I/L to facilitate payment on behalf of the entire group. I/Ls should keep careful records for porterage expenses paid on behalf of the participants. I/Ls will give participants refunds if the deducted amount exceeds actual amounts paid. If any additional funds become necessary, the I/L should collect money directly from the participants.

### *Covering Participants' Expenses*

Under no circumstances should I/Ls disburse funds for or on behalf of any participant for expenses incurred in excess of the participant's authorized per diem or other allowance. If an I/L makes such disbursements, the I/L will have to obtain reimbursement from the participant or personally bear the out-of-pocket expense. The State Department cannot assume responsibility for such expenses.

### *Travel Advance: Reimbursable Expenses*

Along with per diem, NPAs may issue the I/L advance funds to cover miscellaneous expenses incurred during the assignment. The I/L should consult with the NPA PO on agency specific accounting procedures required at the conclusion of the assignment. Reimbursable expenditures generally fall into four categories:

1. Transportation Charges
2. Baggage Charges
3. Communication Charges
4. Cultural Allowances

### **Transportation Charges**

#### *Ground Transportation*

While ECA provides travel funds for project-related ground transportation, not all expenditures are reimbursable. Because ECA deems travel to and from airports inter-city transportation, it entitles an I/L to claim reimbursement for that expense. I/Ls may also claim any travel expense that involves crossing city lines (i.e. inter-city) during an assignment. Each NPA has its own procedures for this purpose and an I/L should consult with them for particulars.

With prior ECA PO approval, NPAs may authorize reimbursement for taxis to and from professional appointments in lieu of chartered ground transportation for all types of projects. NPAs will prearrange and pay for most transportation for larger groups. NPAs will not reimburse taxi expenses for non-project activities.

#### *Train Travel*

I/Ls may directly purchase and seek reimbursement for train tickets, when authorized. Acela service is considered business class and is not approved for use by I/Ls or participants.

#### *Baggage Charges*

IVLP policy is to cover the cost of up to two pieces of luggage (not to exceed 50 lbs. or 22 kg) for all participants and I/Ls where individual airlines charge for such. Any additional or overweight baggage is at the traveler's own expense. NPAs will advance the funds to I/Ls to cover baggage fees for both participants and the I/Ls themselves. I/Ls should assist participants at airport check-in and pay these costs from advanced travel funds.

### **Reimbursable Communication Charges**

#### *Cell Phones*

Cell phone usage is reimbursed on a prorated monthly fee basis. An I/L who wishes to receive reimbursement must provide ECA and the NPA with the cell phone number used during the assignment. ECA will only authorize reimbursement of other cell phone charges under extraordinary circumstances.

#### *Other Phone Calls*

I/Ls may receive reimbursement for project-related phone calls made while on assignment. If the I/L makes a call from his/her hotel room, he/she must submit the hotel bill and indicate to whom she/he made each call and for what purpose.

#### *Internet Access*

I/Ls may receive reimbursement, on a prorated weekly basis, for project-related use of Internet or wireless

Internet (Mobile Broadband). An I/L must provide ECA and the NPA with the email address used during the assignment. He/she must also provide the NPA with a copy of the receipt reflecting Internet access charges or a copy of a monthly bill with a data plan. ECA POs may only authorize other Internet charges under extraordinary circumstances.

### *Fax Expenses*

Charges for all faxes related to an ECA assignment will be reimbursed upon presentation of receipts at the end of an assignment.

### **Disallowed Communication Charges**

NPAs cannot reimburse the interpreter for the following expenditures.

- **Internet Service Providers:** ECA will not cover home-based Internet access charges or fees charged by Internet Service Providers. The cost of establishing an Internet connection is the I/L's responsibility. If the I/L wishes to use the Internet during an assignment, he/she is encouraged to take advantage of any free services provided by his/her hotels either in the rooms or at a business center.
- Fees charged by commercial institutions (Kinko's, etc.) for the electronic transmission or faxing of I/L reports.

### **Cultural Allowances**

When an I/L accompanies a participant to an approved cultural performance or activity, the NPA and/or I/L may purchase the tickets. The I/L must report any tickets purchased on his/her expense voucher accompanied by receipts. ECA does not permit and NPAs will not reimburse I/Ls to use cultural allowance for the purchase of books, videos, audio recordings, etc. for his/her own use.

In certain cases ECA or the NPA may request the I/L to assume responsibility for a portion of the participant's cultural allowance. In such instances, it is important for the I/L to ascertain the exact nature of the expense and the exact manner in which to account for the money. Some NPAs have special forms for this purpose. The I/L should never undertake this responsibility without fully understanding specific NPA spending, accounting, and voucher procedures.

### **Expenses Incurred at Home Base**

The I/L is usually required to stay at the hotel at his/her home base during an assignment with participants because it is in the best interest of the project. The I/L must submit the hotel receipts to the NPA for accounting purposes.

If the I/L is authorized to stay at home by ECA, he/she must incur the cost of his/her transportation to and from the place of work, even when this place of work is not a fixed one. The only exceptions to this rule are 1) the I/L's trip from home to the airport to meet the participant upon arrival, and from the airport to the participant's hotel; and 2) from the participant's hotel to the airport and from there back to the I/L's home when seeing the participant off at the end of the visit. These trips are reimbursable and should be claimed as expenses at the end of an assignment.

When the I/L is meeting the participant in a city other than the I/L's home base, the I/L's transportation from home to the airport at the beginning of the trip and from the airport to home at the end of the trip is reimbursable and should be included in the I/L's travel reimbursement claim.

### **Expense Reports**

As a rule, I/Ls are required to submit expense reports to the NPA within thirty (30) calendar days of the conclusion of the assignment. Failure to comply with this deadline may result in the suspension of further

assignments until the expense report is received. Non-governmental program agencies generally do not require vouchering on per diem, but rather only on additional expenses claimed. However, all hotel receipts must be submitted. Receipts for any single item in excess of \$25.00 must be included. Please note that LS will not intervene in disputes between I/Ls and NPAs regarding reimbursable expenses.

## **Relationship with the Office of Language Services**

### **Compensation for Services**

The Office of Language Services (LS) compensates contract interpreters/international visitor liaisons (I/Ls) for services rendered with funds received from the requesting bureau.

To obtain payment for services rendered, I/Ls must file Voucher Form DS-3023, which they may obtain from LS. To ensure prompt payment, a copy of this form should be scanned and e-mailed to LS. The e-mail address for vouchers is [LSSalaryVouchers@state.gov](mailto:LSSalaryVouchers@state.gov). All contractors are required by law to arrange for the direct deposit of their salary. This necessitates the contractor submitting the Direct Deposit Form (available from LS); the Treasury Department will make an automatic electronic transfer to the contractor's bank account.

I/Ls should carefully fill out Voucher Form DS-3023 and must include their DUNS number, contract number/BOA (or write "PO" if working on a purchase order); signature, updated electronic banking information, and LS job number. Furthermore, they should clearly indicate on the voucher that the assignment was performed for ECA. Failure to follow these instructions may result in a significant delay in payment. It is in the I/L's interest to file the payment voucher as soon as a particular assignment ends; however, it may not be submitted before the assignment concludes.

The fiscal year for the U.S. Government is October 1 - September 30. I/Ls who complete assignments that bridge the fiscal year (September 30) must prepare two salary vouchers. The first voucher will cover the period of the assignment through September 30, while the second will cover the period beginning October 1 through the end of the assignment. Note that on October 1, the first digit of the I/L's contract number changes to the new fiscal year. The contract number is comprised of the last digit of the fiscal year, followed by a zero, and then a four-digit number that is unique to each I/L.

I/Ls must submit their vouchers within 30 days of the completion of their assignments. The State Department incurs penalties for late and unpaid obligations. Failure to file a voucher within this deadline may result in suspension of further assignments until the voucher is received.

Only one assignment should be billed on a voucher. Use of a voucher form for more than one assignment creates significant problems in processing and causes delays and errors. Vouchers covering more than one assignment will be returned to contractors without processing.

The number of days billed must be identical to or smaller than the number of days tasked in the original work order or provided to the I/L by their assigning officer. I/Ls should advise the ECA PO at the end of the project if the number of days worked has exceeded the number of days authorized by the LS assigning

officer at the start of the assignment. The ECA PO must confirm to the LS assigning officer that the project exceeded the authorized number of days before LS can process the I/L's voucher for payment. I/Ls will be paid for each day of service actually rendered and can expect to be on duty seven (7) days a week. I/Ls may not take vacation days during an assignment, even on group project assignments where more than one I/L may be present. Any day away from the assignment must be approved in advance by the ECA PO, and reported to LS. Payment for services and per diem will not be made for such days.

I/L project and expense reports must be submitted before or attached to salary Voucher Form DS-3023 when submitted. The LS Interagency Rate Board adjusts rates at which I/Ls are paid annually.

### **Cancellation Fees**

The Basic Ordering Agreement (BOA) does not provide for payment of cancellation fees. The normal method of compensating contract I/Ls for cancelled assignments is to offer the next available assignment in his or her particular language skill set. There are limited occasions when the contracting officer or LS Director will approve partial compensation for cancelled assignments. In general, approval is restricted to situations in which the contractor can provide written confirmation of other work that was refused in order for him or her to accept the assignment that was subsequently cancelled. Requests for consideration of cancellation payments should be directed to the assigning officer, who will forward the request to the contracting officer.

### **Contractor Status**

Contract I/Ls may not refer to themselves as "employees" of the State Department or the federal government. The legal status of contractors is clearly defined in the clauses accompanying the Basic Ordering Agreement (Article 1 of the Additional Terms and Conditions of the contract). Furthermore, contractors should not identify themselves as "State Department Certified Interpreters" as this is strictly forbidden under the terms of the Basic Ordering Agreement (Clause 3). Nevertheless, the participants, local sponsors, and others whom they meet will usually regard contract I/Ls as representatives of the State Department. Contractors should identify themselves as professional interpreters/international visitor liaisons assigned to accompany official ECA participants.

As contractors working on ECA programs, I/Ls agree to adhere to the State Department's policy regarding sexual harassment and substance abuse. Contract I/Ls are also bound by the federal government's regulations forbidding the acceptance of cash gratuities or gifts of more than token value.

The Office of Language Services maintains a public-facing website that allows easy access by contract interpreters/international liaisons. From time to time, LS posts information that I/Ls will find useful and important. The website can be accessed at <http://www.languageservices.state.gov>.

### **Non-disclosure Statement**

I/Ls are expected to abide by the spirit and intent of the non-disclosure statement that is part of their Basic Ordering Agreement with the Office of Language Services. The purpose of the statement is to ensure that sensitive information they may obtain during appointments while carrying out official interpreting duties will not be disseminated beyond the source. The non-disclosure statement, which all contractors are required to sign before they can accept assignments from LS, reads as follows:

"They (the contractors) shall not communicate to any person or organization any information made known to them by reason of their performance of services under this agreement which has not been made public, except in the necessary performance of their duties or upon written authorization of the Contracting Officer."

## **Medical Insurance**

I/Ls are responsible for obtaining their own medical and disability insurance and are not eligible to receive the health benefits that the participants receive through the State Department. Because I/Ls are contractors rather than employees, they are not eligible to claim workmen's compensation or unemployment benefits.



## **I/L Report**

### **Written Project Reports**

ECA generally requires the I/L to write a report on the assignment to assist in the evaluation of the project. I/Ls should e-mail a copy of their report to [LS-ECAReports@state.gov](mailto:LS-ECAReports@state.gov). In addition, a copy of the report should be sent via e-mail to the ECA PO.

When more than one I/L is on the same assignment, each I/L is required to submit a report, unless otherwise indicated by the ECA PO and the LS assigning officer. An individual report should be prepared by each I/L. LS will return any identical reports from different I/Ls and will not make payment until the amended report has been submitted.

I/L reports are read by staff members at: ECA and State Department missions abroad; by NPA staff; by local program sponsors; and by LS assigning officers. The local sponsors involved in a particular project will also receive the entire report from ECA/PE/V/C. The I/L report is often the only written report available on a particular project. For this reason, inadequate reports will be returned for revision. The focus of the report should be on the impact of the project and aspects of the project that were particularly noteworthy (positive or negative), and should explain briefly why they are noteworthy. For example, was the project theme particularly well addressed? Did the participant make an important contact? Were new perspectives on the topic presented? In addition, the report should note meetings that significantly contributed to the objectives of the project and why they were important. The report should also highlight changes in the participants' perceptions of the United States as a result of their experiences in this country.

I/L reports should be as evaluative, candid, informative, and as professional as possible. It is essential that the report be submitted promptly, while interest, events, and impressions are fresh. Thus, the I/L must submit the report within 15 days of the conclusion of the assignment. I/Ls may request an extension of this time frame from their LS assigning officer if they are not able to prepare the report promptly because of immediate reassignment or other compelling reasons.

Payment will be made only after submission of the completed report to the LS Administrative Office. Any costs incurred in preparing the report are the I/L's responsibility. The reporting requirement is considered an essential part of the I/L's function. Failure to submit the report promptly without good reason is considered a dereliction of duty.

The report should be prepared in a format compatible with Microsoft Word. It should be single-spaced and pages must be numbered. The report should follow the outline described on the following page. The outline is not meant to limit the scope of the I/L's coverage, although concise, complete coverage of the project is considered a virtue.

The I/L should exercise care to ensure that the participants do not get a false impression of the nature and intent of the report. It is best not to mention the reporting requirement at all. If the issue is raised, however, the I/L should explain that reports are used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the IVLP.

## **I/L Report Outline**

### ***Cover Sheet Format***

REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR:

- IVs' Names (capitalize surname):
- Participants' Titles:
- Countries of Origin:

Reports for group projects should give the title of the project and provide the data specified above for each participant.

- Dates of U.S. Visit:
- ECA Program Officer:
- National Program Agency:
- National Program Agency Program Officer:
- Report Prepared by: (I/L's NAME MUST APPEAR HERE)
- Date Report Submitted:

### ***Project Report Elements***

- **Perceptual Changes:** Include insights into how the IV responded to the project and the overall impact of the project, and how it affected his or her thinking about the United States and the political, economic, or social issues the participant came to explore.
- **City-by-City Descriptions:** Rather than long narratives, you should keep your text brief, simply explaining those aspects of the project that were particularly noteworthy, such as individuals and/or institutions that appear to have had the greatest impact on the success or failure of the project. It is extremely important to indicate why the meetings had the impact they did, but please do not simply copy the project book information into your report. The highlights should focus on the substance of the meetings, and not simply repeat the interlocutor's name and organization, which can be found in the project book.
- **Logistics:** Include information about hotels, pacing, travel, and constructive suggestions to improve logistics and facilitation of similar projects in the future.
- **Diversity Goals:** This section should cover how well the project succeeded in meeting ECA's diversity goals. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs strives to ensure that all projects conducted under its mandate faithfully reflect the diversity of the intended audience. The Bureau requires that all grant recipients aggressively seek and actively encourage the involvement of international participants and U.S. presenters from traditionally under-represented groups, including women, racial and ethnic minorities, the physically challenged, and those of low/moderate income.

- **Names/Addresses of Americans to Receive Thank-you Letters and Why:** Please make sure that the name of the IV and his/her country of origin is on this page. Include complete mailing addresses and a brief explanation of the interlocutor's special contribution to the project, and the ECA PO will send a thank you note.
- **Optional Section (separate document):** If an I/L has comments on a particular participant's project that should not be shared beyond ECA, the I/L should send these comments in a separate document or email, with an indication of their confidentiality, directly to the appropriate ECA PO. For example, if the I/L has observations about the appropriateness or usefulness of a visitor's selection to participate in the IVLP, or about incidents that might embarrass a participant, such comments should be included in a separate document.

## Annexes

### **Annex 1: LS Letter** - *Information and Suggestions for Exchange Visitors Traveling With I/Ls*

### **Annex 2: Voucher**

### **Annex 3: Voucher Instructions**

#### **SUBMISSION OF SALARY VOUCHER TIPS**

1. All changes to banking information must be completed in SAM at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). Then notify LS by sending an email to [LS-changeofinformation@state.gov](mailto:LS-changeofinformation@state.gov). You must provide your name and DUNS Number.
2. All salary vouchers must be e-mailed to [lssalaryvouchers@state.gov](mailto:lssalaryvouchers@state.gov). If you are required to submit a corrected voucher, print CORRECTED COPY at the top of the voucher to avoid multiple payments.
3. LS no longer accepts salary vouchers with banking information or social security number.
4. LS no longer accepts salary vouchers that are faxed.
5. You must have a 9-digit DUNS Number.
6. Vouchers will be returned without processing if:
  - the signature is missing
  - the old version of the voucher is submitted.
  - vouchers are submitted without a job number.
7. Only one copy of the voucher is needed. No duplicates unless advised by your assigning officer.
8. Handwritten vouchers must be legible or they will be returned.
9. Do not submit a voucher with the report listed on the voucher unless the report is attached or sent the same time as the voucher.
10. Make sure all vouchers are signed.
11. The voucher number box is for official use only-LEAVE BLANK.
12. You must provide your BOA number.
13. The ACH form is only for contractors on purchase orders.
14. Do not send vouchers, reports or salary voucher inquiries to Erica Foster's direct email address.
15. Do not contact Erica Foster by phone (or leave a message) regarding the status of a salary voucher. Direct your inquiries to your assigning officer, who will follow up.



16. When inquiring about your vouchers with your assigning officer, you must provide your name, job number, the period of services worked and your DUNS Number.

## **ECA Contact List**

### **Office of International Visitors (ECA/PE/V)**

Director	202-632-9361
Deputy Director	202-632-3282 or 3303

### **IVLP Division**

Division Chief	202-632-9380
AF Africa Branch	202-632-3305
EAP East Asia and Pacific Branch	202-632-2811
EUR Europe and Eurasia Branch	202-632-2822
NEA Near East and North Africa	202-632-9343
SCA South and Central Asia Branch	202-632-9335
WHA Western Hemisphere Branch	202-632-3296

### **IVLP On Demand Division**

Africa and Europe Branch	202-632-2840
East Asia & Pacific, Near East & North Africa, South & Central Asia, and Western Hemisphere Branch	202-632-2830

### **Community Resources Division**

Division Chief	202-632-9381
Community Relations Branch	202-632-2841
New York Program Branch	212-399-5783

### **Office of Citizen Exchanges**

Director	202-619-5348
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**State Department Operations Center** (After-Hours Emergencies\*) 202-647-1512

\*Please request to speak with the ECA duty officer

## **Office of Language Services Contact List**

I/L Assigning Unit Chief	202-663-3992
Information	202 261-8800
Payments	Contact your Assigning Officer

<b>State Department Operations Center</b> (After-Hours Emergencies)	202-647-1512
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